

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants thank Examiner Potter for the helpful and courteous discussion of June 3, 2004. During the discussion, Applicants' U.S. representative pointed out that the Office Action summary of April 4, 2004 may not agree with the Detailed Action of the Office Action of April 4, 2004. The Examiner indicated that the subject matter of Claim 5 is allowable and that original Claim 5 is an independent claim.

Applicants note that the U.S. patent cited by the Office may not qualify as prior art to the present application. The Igarashi patent (U.S. 6,604,953) has an issue date of August 12, 2003; a publication date of December 6, 2001 (U.S. 2001/0049208); and a filing date of July 16, 2001. Applicants note that none of these dates is earlier than the filing date of the parent application of the present Divisional application. The present Divisional application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to U.S. Serial No. 09/662,122.

Since the U.S. effective filing date of the present application is before any of the issue date, publication date or filing date of the Igarashi patent, the rejections of the Office Action of April 20, 2004 are not sustainable and should be withdrawn.

Applicants note that a Information Disclosure Statement was filed in the present application on June 23, 2003. Applicants respectfully request the Office acknowledge consideration of the references thereon by returning a signed, dated and initialed copy of the form PTO-1449 submitted together with a filing of June 23, 2003.

Applicants note that the present application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 to three prior filed Japanese applications. Applicants respectfully request acknowledgement of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 in the next communication from the Office.

Applicants submit the present application is now in condition for allowance and respectfully request the passage of all now-pending claims to Issue.

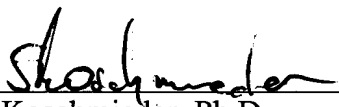
Respectfully submitted,

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